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DPI VISTA Monthly

Tips for Upscaling Your Promising Practices

By Ruth Anne Landsverk

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Save the Dates!

June 1:
VISTA Future Plans form due

June 21:
VISTA Check-in

June 30:
NNPS Update due

July 2:
VISTA Service Reflection Piece due

The Harvard Family Research Project has identified several approaches to effectively “upscale” or growing successful programs, ideas, skills, and policies. The findings may be useful to VISTAs considering how to reproduce similar positive results for family-school-community partnerships in neighboring schools, districts, or community sites.

Upscaling can mean deepening the reach or the impact of a program, too. For example, it's not unusual for partnership efforts to start by hosting numerous events for families at school. Consider how your program might upscale at your site to involve more families in more ways, achieving measurable results for students.

The “traveling of ideas” to spread promising practices and programs is wonderful, but how can they achieve lasting results? Here are a few highlights:

1. Sites best-suited to upscaling have:
 - An organization and community fully knowledgeable and supportive of the program.
 - Well-trained, supportive staff
 - The ability to support program elements essential for success (i.e., an Action Team, One-

Year Action Plan, and budget).

Are these elements present at your site, or at another site looking to improve partnerships?

2. Successful upscaling most often happens in places with unmet needs. How can your project and ideas be used to meet the needs of children and families at another site?
3. Good communications are essential both for a clear understanding of roles—who is doing what—and to ensure that everyone is work-



ing toward a common goal.

4. Flexibility is a virtue. Your efforts may be most successful at a new site if they look a little different, depending on the strengths and resources at the site.
5. A slow, deliberate approach works better

than rapid reproduction. Upscaling is a process that takes time and thought to make sure the initial idea works well and to figure out how it can flourish in a new place.

Use your Partnership Action Team to evaluate how well and why your partnership efforts worked this year. What data on attendance, reflections, or results have you collected to help you evaluate? What steps can your Action Team take next year to deepen your results or to spread promising partnership practices to another school or site?

For help with evaluating your partnerships, see Chapter 9 (p. 307) of *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*.

For more Promising Partnership Practices ideas, view the National Network of Partnership Schools' collection: www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/ppp/index.htm.

The full text of Spring 2010 Evaluation Exchange newsletter on Scaling Impact is available online at www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/current-issue-scaling-impact.

Why I'm Proud of You

by Betsy Prueter

The end of the school year is fast approaching. You're thanking your volunteers for their hard work, counting up those last donations, congratulating your action teams on their success, grateful that the library is air conditioned, and showing gratitude towards your supervisors for their support and guidance. It's been a busy, challenging, and rewarding year. DPI is fortunate to have VISTAs who impact families and communities in meaningful ways and we should tell you why! Consider this a pat on the back (ok, 8 pats on the back).

1. You wrote and submitted over 350 bi-weekly reports.
2. You reached families through newsletters, email, phone calls, learning nights, potlucks, resource fairs, and meetings.
3. You mapped needs and assets to better serve your community.
4. You've met with executive directors, students, parents, school board members, community agencies, library staff, non-profit workers, city government officials and teachers to promote meaningful partnerships and the VISTA mission.
5. You've generated over \$258,307 of in-kind and monetary donations for your sites.
6. You've developed sustainable partnerships with libraries, schools, non-profits, and businesses that will continue after you're gone.
7. You've kept your perspective and remembered how your work, at your site, in your city, is building strong communities.
8. You've helped your sites increase their capacity by being organized, enthusiastic, committed, and resourceful.
- 9.
- 10.

I've left those last two blank on purpose and propose a little assignment. What are you proud of from this past year? What would you like to pat yourself on the back for? Go ahead and do it. Reflect a bit on why you deserve such kudos and while you're at it, take some time to send along affirmation to some other VISTAs. We could all use some encouragement to kick off our summer projects, programs, and tasks!



Erica's Corner

by Erica Spurgeon

When we were growing up we couldn't wait for summer vacation. Swimming, riding bikes, tree forts, and hanging out with our friends under the warm sun. However, we all know about the brain drain that can happen in the summer when kids forget about keeping their minds sharp. As VISTAs, we can help close the perceived gap between fun, physical activity and more grueling school work. Many of us will be working with students of various ages this summer. So I have some tips to help your students remember that even though they are learning things can be fun.

1. New friends. Who doesn't love making friends? Summer programs and camps can offer this opportunity.
 2. Get ahead in school. The average student loses 2 months of learning during summer. By being in a summer program they can not only keep what they've learned but they can be ahead of the game.
 3. They will learn new things. Maybe it's how to paint or build something. Summer programs offer opportunities not always available in school.
 4. They learn "grown up skills". They will learn to respect themselves as well as others, they will learn how to increase their self-esteem, and they will learn tolerance.
 5. They can still do the fun summer stuff. Riding bikes, building tree forts, and hanging out with friends are not out of the picture. You can still do these things but now you may have more friends to do them with!
- Summer programs are extremely beneficial to students and families who have children with special needs or children who just need a little help so even though we have to keep that in mind remember having fun will help them and you get the most out of summer!

Recipe of the Month: The Best Pasta Salad Ever

By Jim Handorf

Dressing Ingredients:

1 jar sundried tomatoes
4 cloves of garlic
3 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 cup extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Salad Ingredients:

corkscrew pasta (16 oz)
1 pint ripe cherry tomatoes
(cut in halves)
basil (10-15 leaves),
chopped or julienne
1½ cup parmesan cheese,
freshly grated

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water to cool the noodles.
2. In a blender, combine sundried tomatoes, garlic, salt, pepper, and vinegar until the tomatoes are chopped. Continue blending while drizzling in olive oil, until mixed together.
3. Pour 2/3 of the dressing over the pasta. Add olives and toss together.
4. Add remaining ingredients, tossing and adding dressing until the salad is coated to your liking.
5. Serve on a big platter with an extra sprinkling of parmesan cheese.



“Hey! That’s a good idea!”

Sylvia Sedrak, VISTA with the Wausau Early Childhood Program, planned a Volunteer Appreciation night, with the help of a parent volunteer. Students decorated bookmarks for the event, and Starbucks donated goods. This event made great strides in creating community buy-in and creating parent leadership opportunities.

VOLUNTEERING

Abby Churchill, VISTA the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Education, worked on incorporating service-learning into the Science of Wheels program, with an online course to accompany the summer project.

COLLABORATING, LEARNING AT HOME

Cara Slingerland, VISTA with Urban Day School and SUPAR in Milwaukee, used partnering organization

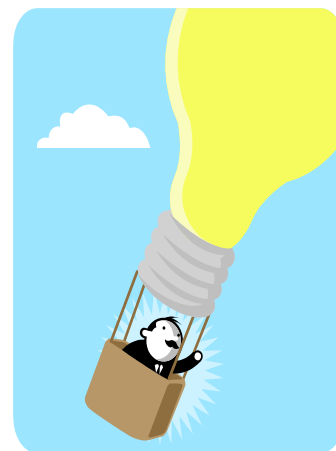
Parents Plus, to provide parent resources and information to Urban Day parents during their parent meetings. Hopefully the information provided in these resources will bring in more parents the future.

COLLABORATION, PARENTING

Sara Byrnes, VISTA with the Fond du Lac Public Library, worked with the group Young Professionals to develop the “Beating the Financial Squeeze” program. This program, open to members of Young Professionals of Fond du Lac, focuses on topics on issues like budgeting and wise investment decisions.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Lizzy Lowrey, VISTA with the Racine Public Library, has worked to create an advisory council at the library in order to build stronger connections to



the organizations that serve the populations the library is trying to connect with. In an effort to create sustainability, Lizzy has passed over much of the leadership in leading the council to a library staff member willing to help in the next VISTA's efforts.

DECISION MAKING, COLLABORATION

VISTAs in the News



Becky Smith—Madison Metropolitan School District

Helped launch Leopold Elementary's Walking School Bus, giving students the opportunity to arrive at school safely, on-time, and fully alert and ready to learn.

<http://leopoldelementary.blogspot.com/>

Betsy Prueter—WI DPI

Was interviewed in an article discussing the increasing number of applicants for the VISTA Project in Wisconsin.

www.rivertowns.net/event/article/id/233090/group/State%20News/

Sound Bites: Community Reactions to VISTA Work

In a thank you card regarding the Action Team: "I really appreciate all of the things you do for the students, faculty and school. Thanks for helping make West Milwaukee great!"- Michelle Gamache, parent at Longfellow and West Milwaukee - Stephanie Dorman, West Allis/West Milwaukee School District

"Thank you for all your work. I really appreciate you!" - Leopold teacher (on garden committee) - Becky Smith, Madison Metropolitan School District



Sara Byrnes is currently serving at the Fond du Lac Public Library in Fond du Lac, WI

Becky: What's your favorite way to spend a sunny summer afternoon?

Sara: This summer, it will be to take a nice stroll to Lakeside Park, lay out a towel, and curl up by Lake Winnebago with a nice book and soak up the sun.



Becky: Who is the funniest person you know?

Sara: Most of my family and friends tend to talk with some level of sarcastically funny snark. But if I had to pick one person it would probably be my grandma because some of the stuff that comes out of her mouth is so unexpected. That sweet little devout catholic (who's probably never intentionally done a bad thing in her life), reading the complete dictionary definition of the "F" word aloud at Christmas dinner is probably the funniest thing I have ever heard.

Becky: What are you passionate about (besides eliminating poverty)?

Sara: I don't consider myself a passionate person but I posed this question to Josh and he didn't hesitate to remind me of

DPI VISTA Summer Retreat

Come celebrate the end of your service with food and fun!

July 16
10a-4p

Devil's Lake State Park—Shagbark Shelter (on the south shore)

Please RSVP to Kristine Nadolski by July 1
(knadolsk@wausau.k12.wi.us)

Indicate if you have any dietary restrictions



I was commissioned to write a funny article. I'm not a good writer and I'm not funny, so here's a bunch of lists. (Part 2)

Perks of being a VISTA which no one ever mentions when you sign up:

1. People are more interested in you as a person than they would be if you weren't a VISTA
2. Intrinsic, mushy sounding things that you work is "really about" which you can speak to when wooing someone or impressing parents
3. Our super fly "V" pin
4. You get to have lots of conversations with people about "who *really* pays you"
5. You can win 2% of your monthly income in the form of a Starbucks gift card for knowing that Dustin Young lives in an apartment made of nothing but mahogany

Things I am convinced every VISTA in our project has in common:

1. Is a cool person

Jim's Lists: Part 2

By Jim Handorf

2. Hates answering questions posed to a group on teleconference
3. Dislikes me at least 4% more because I am a ginger
4. Doesn't think living on a stipend is as hard as originally thought
5. Demonstrates point #4 by buying frivolous items worth \$35-50 monthly, such as magnets for fridge, leather-bound books, mahogany, and cans of iced tea (or is that just me and Dustin?)

Most likely responses by people reading this article:

1. When did the editors of the newsletter start letting just anyone write for them?
2. Jim is fired
3. Where did Dustin get all that mahogany?
4. That wasn't funny, and it wasn't writing, so I guess Jim was right
5. Why couldn't the spot this list took up be used by, um, a large article about, um, forming a committee to identify sustainable community partners for a children's book drive?

VISTA to VISTA with Sara Byrnes and Becky Smith

the how enthusiastically I talk about the TV shows I enjoy, like Glee. So apparently I am passionate about Glee.

Becky: What is your favorite dish/food to cook/bake/make?

Sara: The kitchen in my apartment is really teeny so I don't do a lot of cooking. I guess I do make treats for our Job Smart U classes. So I suppose my favorite thing to bake at the moment are these yummy oatmeal chocolate chip cookies.

Becky: If you were in a street fight, who would you want by your side? (Someone you know) **Sara:** I'd like my brother because he could probably talk our way out of the fight. If he couldn't argue our way out of it, he then wouldn't hesitate to fight just as dirty as me. Without ethics to impair our tactics, I feel we would have a better shot of winning.

Becky: What accomplishment as a VISTA are you most proud of?

Sara: The handful of Opportunity Center users that have come in and reported getting a job.

Becky: If you could do any extreme sport without fear of being hurt, which would you choose?

Sara: I have always wanted to skydive but would never do it unless I had a 100% guarantee that my parachute would open. Since a 100% guarantee isn't possible, it likely won't happen in my lifetime.



Becky: What is the best part of your typical VISTA day at work?

Sara: Happy days are when we get an e-mail or phone call from a potential Opportunity Center volunteer that is not a total nut job and can actually work when we need them to.

Becky: Do you have any hidden talents?

Sara: I am actually a rather adept trumpet player. I haven't played in awhile but back in the day, a good chunk of my college tuition was covered by a music scholarship.



Becky Smith is currently serving with the Madison Metropolitan School District in Madison, WI

Sara: What is your favorite time of day (Morning, Afternoon, Evening)?

Becky: I would say that afternoon is my favorite part of the day because I really enjoy the sunshine. I especially like afternoons on the weekends when I can relax or hang with friends.

Sara: Do you have any plans for after your VISTA term is over?

Becky: I plan to win the lottery and then spend some time traveling around the world. If that doesn't happen, (though I'm pretty sure it will), I will be job hunting. My focus is on positions in higher-ed. My ideal job would be working for pre-college programs, but I'd also be interested in some non-profit

community type jobs.

Sara: What is your favorite breakfast cereal?

Becky: Lately I've been on a Life and Quaker Oats Squares kick. These two never get old. I highly recommend them if you're looking to update your breakfast.

Sara: If you were growing a garden and could only grow one thing, what would it be?

Becky: I would probably choose tomatoes since they are so versatile – sauces, salsa, salads, plus they are super healthy. It's a hard choice though cause I am vegetarian and there are so many good options! I don't have a garden right now, but I am growing some green peppers and jalapeños in yogurt containers.



Sara: If you could trade places with another person (real or fictional) for a week who would it be and why?

Becky: Maybe I would choose to be someone who is very opposite of me, like an Olympic athlete. I am not very athletic, so this could be fun. I'd be one of those awesome female snowboarders who fly in the air.

Sara: If someone wrote a biography about you, what do you think the title should be?

Becky: This is a hard question. How about "The Adventures of Reina Bequita." Bequita was a nickname that some friends started calling me several years ago. I don't know if my life could be called an adventure, but it's been pretty fun.

Sara: What's one thing about yourself that people are surprised to learn?

Becky: People may be surprised to learn that after college I lived for 2 years in Mexico teaching English. This was not in some tourist destination hot spot, but in a smaller city in the south central part of the country. I loved it and want to go back soon! Maybe after I win the lottery.

Sara: What's your favorite project that you have worked on so far this year?

Becky: It's hard to say, but I think my favorite is the one I'm currently working on which is the Walking School Bus. It's been a lot of work, so I'm a bit stressed out about it, but we had the first two days and they were amazing! We had 40 students the first day and 50 the second. Everyone had a good time despite the 7:00am start time. It really has the potential to continue next year which makes me really happy.



Sara: What is the last book you read and why did you choose to read it?

Becky: I like to read a lot, so I always have a book going. The last book I read was called "Enrique's Journey." It's about Central American children that ride on the tops of trains through Mexico trying to get to the US to reach their families. It's incredibly sad and tragic, and also absolutely true. Immigration is another issue that is important to me and that is what led me to read this book. I'm happy to lend it out to anyone or talk about these issues with you.

What I Learned this Year: Tips for Supervisors

By Cindy Janecek, VISTA Supervisor at the Indian Community School

Cindy supervises VISTA Hannah Schulz, who serves at both the Indian Community School and Parents Plus in Milwaukee. The Indian Community School serves Native American families from Milwaukee County with students in grades K4-8.

As I reflect on the last year as a VISTA supervisor I have many memories. I remember the excitement and anticipation of being accepted into this program and knowing that we would get a VISTA worker for the school year. This was a welcome addition as our school has been struggling with parent involvement for years and was so hopeful that a VISTA would come and guide us through this process. Not knowing really what a VISTA was or what AmeriCorps was I was anxious at how this was all going to work and how we were going to work with the VISTA. Not only did I want this to be a good experience I wanted our VISTA too have a good experience here as well. After all they were giving up a year to come and work with us. That seemed like such an overwhelming responsibility in the beginning. Luckily for me we were able to work closely with DPI and Parents Plus throughout the process and went to several trainings and orientations which really prepared me and guided me through this process. I felt prepared to take on the challenge.

When our VISTA Hannah started we treated her like a new employee and went through all the orientation with her that we would do with any new employee. What was different however was making sure that we let the school staff know who Hannah was and what her position was all about. I feel this is important to do so that your staff can embrace the VISTA from the beginning and everyone is on the same page.

As a supervisor I really recommend that following all the guidelines given to you in regards to training your VISTA be followed. This really keeps both the VISTA and supervisor on track and formalizes the training process. This was as helpful to me as a supervisor as I could look at this and know exactly what I was supposed to do by when.

Although on the job training and guidance are important to do on an ongoing and regular basis, I feel that including your VISTA in every aspect of what you do is so important. This helps them feel connected to the whole school/agency and hopefully makes them feel as important as anyone else on the team in which they are working with.

We were lucky to have a VISTA who was from this area so they did not really have to relocate. Spending time ahead of time with your VISTA to find out what their needs will be is helping in planning what you need to get ready for them to make their transition as smooth as possible. Some of the things we provided included school lunches, a welcome gift bag, and gas cards, when we were able to do so. Knowing the resources in your community for them to utilize will also be helpful if they need assistance with anything.

As the year went on our VISTA became a strong member of our team and was so helpful in working on projects for us. Projects our VISTA worked on included helping support our current Action Team, mentoring the parent group throughout the school year to become strong leaders, fundraising, community resources, researching and developing community volunteer opportunities for our scholarship students, and being an active member of our Families and Schools Together (FAST) program team. With the hard work of our VISTA we were able to make significant progress in each of these areas and are moving forward to sustainability of these areas in the near future.

As the year winds down I look at the past year with a lot of gratitude for the work our VISTA has done as well as some sadness that she will be leaving us in August. We have begun reviewing what she has accomplished and making plans for her summer VAD and how best we will document what she has done so the new VISTA can continue her work in the upcoming year.



Good Luck,

Dustin Young and Robyn Krimke!

They will be completing their terms of service this month.

Thank you for all your hard work! You will be missed!

June VISTA Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Cultural Carnival @ A.C Keifer— Wausau 5:30p	2	3 Neighborhood Clean-Up @ Grant—Milwaukee 10:00a	4	5 Special Olympics Field Day—Wausau 3:30p Lakeland Family Resource Center Family Festival @ Washburn County Fairgrounds— Spooner 12:00p—4:00p
6	7 Spirit Week @ Grant—Milwaukee (June 7—June 12)	8 Pajama Story Night @ Grant— Milwaukee 6:15p	9	10 Donuts with Dad @ Grant— Milwaukee 8:00a	11	12 Family Field Day @ Grant—Milwaukee 9:30a—1:30p
13	14 Howe Family Resource Center Summer Program “Awesome Art” - Green Bay (June 14—June 18)	15	16 Summer VISTA PSO—Rhinelander	17 Summer VISTA PSO—WI Rapids	18 Summer VISTA PSO—Waukesha	19
20	21 Howe Family Resource Center Summer Program “Passport to Any- where” - Green Bay (June 21—June 25)	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Howe Family Resource Center Summer Program “CSI Investigates” - Green Bay (June 28—July 2)	29	30			

EVENT CONTACTS

- For more information on events in Wausau, contact Sylvia Sedrak at ssedrak@wausau.k12.wi.us.
- For more information on events with the Lakeland Family Resource Center, contact Sara Hubin at sarahubin@hotmail.com.
- For more information on Summer PSO, contact Betsy Prueter at betsy.prueter@dpi.wi.gov.
- For more information on events with the Howe Family Resource Center, contact Erica Spurgeon at spurgeoe@uwgb.edu.
- For more information on events at Grant in Milwaukee, contact Robyn Krimke at krimkerb@milwaukee.k12.wi.us.

“Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud.”

Helen Dyer

Grant Opportunities

National Endowment for the Arts: Grants for Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth

NEA Grants for Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth support in-depth, curriculum-based arts education experiences that occur over an extended period in school-based or community settings. Projects must provide participatory learning and engage students with skilled artists, teachers, and excellent art. All projects must include: 1) the opportunity for students and their teachers to experience exemplary works of art, in live form wherever possible; 2) study of the art experienced, including the acquisition of skills for practicing the art form, where appropriate; 3) the performance/making of art within the disciplines studied; and 4) assessment of student learning according to national or state arts education standards. Maximum award: \$150,000. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations that administer school-based projects for children and youth between kindergarten and grade 12, directly connected to a school curriculum and instructional program, and ensuring the application of national or state arts education standard; or community-based projects for children and youth between ages 5 and 18.

Deadline: June 10, 2010.
www.arts.gov/grants/apply/GAP11/LITA.html

ASCAP Foundation: Grants for Music Education

The ASCAP Foundation is now considering proposals from organizations engaging in music education and talent development programs that support music education for aspiring songwriters and composers. Maximum award: \$3,000. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations.

Deadline: October 1, 2010

www.ascapfoundation.org/grants.html

Freedoms Foundation: Leavey Awards for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education

The Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge Leavey Awards for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education honor outstanding educators who excite a commitment in their students to the free enterprise system and unleash the entrepreneurial skills of their students at the elementary, junior high school, high school, and college level. Maximum award: \$15,000. Eligibility: teachers at schools (K-12), colleges, and universities.

Deadline: November 30, 2010



www.freedomsfoundation.org/Leavy-Awards.cfm

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: Grants to Help Children

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Grants to Help Children fund proposals that aim to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual welfare of children through innovative organizations and/or their programs designed to benefit youth. Maximum award: varies. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations.

Deadline: July 15, 2010

www.cwf-inc.org/grantseekers/overview

Verizon Foundation Grants

The Verizon Foundation makes grants that help people to increase their literacy and educational achievement; avoid being an abuser or a victim of domestic violence; or achieve and sustain their health and safety. Maximum award: \$10,000. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations.

Deadline: October 31, 2010
<http://foundation.verizon.com/grant/guidelines.shtml>

Ezra Jack Keats Foundation: Minigrants

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation offers Minigrants to public and school libraries for programs that encourage literacy and creativity in children. Programs relating to the work of Ezra Jack Keats are welcome, but not required. Maximum award: \$500. Eligibility: public and school libraries.



Deadline: September 15, 2010

www.ezra-jack-keats.org/index.php?

[option=com_content&view=article&id=103&Itemid=65](http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=103&Itemid=65)

AAPT: Frederick and Florence Bauder Endowment for the Support of Physics Teaching

The American Association of Physics Teachers Frederick and Florence Bauder Endowment for the Support of Physics Teaching was established to support special activities in the area of physics teaching. Activities can include but are not limited to the development and distribution of innovative apparatuses for physics teaching; traveling exhibits of apparatuses; and local workshops. Maximum award: \$500. Eligibility: AAPT members.

Deadline: July 1, 2010
www.aapt.org/Programs/grants/bauderfund.cfm